



'IDIOT' SYNDROME, THE RAVAGE OF FUTURE DENTAL HEALTH – A SUCCINCT REVIEW

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Abstract : In the past, when technology was still in its infancy, especially in small towns, people relied on quacks for even the smallest issues since they were ignorant of better options and occasionally had trouble getting the quacks to treat them. Some highly educated people in this digital age rely only on information they get online about health. Those with extensive internet knowledge are beginning to self-medicate, which is causing them health problems and mental stress. We refer to this kind of Internet-savvy self-medication as "IDIOT SYNDROME." This is not simply a problem in the medical industry; it is also rapidly extending to other associated services, such as dentistry. Patients are coming up to dentists and asking them straight out what kind of treatment they want, including the process and material, and whether or not it is appropriate for their clinical situation. All of these are occurring as a result of online information. There is very little literature available on this syndrome because it is a relatively new condition. Therefore, the purpose of this succinct review was to go over the causes of the syndrome, its symptoms, and solutions.

IndexTerms - IDIOT Syndrome; Cyberchondria; Internet Information; IDIOT Syndrome in Dentistry

I. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon known as "IDIOT syndrome," or "Internet Derived Information Obstruction Treatment," occurs when people try to diagnose and treat their health problems using information, they find online without first consulting a professional. This can have a negative impact on each person's individual health outcomes. The World Health Organisation (WHO) refers to this as an "Infodemic," which has complicated the healthcare industry. [1,2]

The IDIOT syndrome, sometimes referred to as "cyberchondria," is a condition in which people, after learning information on the internet, may become more anxious, start self-medicating, or stop recommended treatments abruptly. This syndrome draws attention to the possible dangers of relying solely on internet health resources without seeking professional advice. [3] Various physiological and psychological elements that affect people's behaviour and decision-making processes can have an impact on the emergence of IDIOT syndrome. Self-diagnosis and self-medication based on internet information are examples of impulsive behaviours that can result from the fear of a serious illness or the need for quick fixes. Online health information was so easily accessible that people became overconfident in their ability to diagnose themselves and choose treatments without taking medical professionals' knowledge into account.[4]

There can be serious repercussions for dental health from the IDIOT syndrome. Using the internet for information and putting off getting help from a specialist can exacerbate dental issues and have an impact on general health.[5]

2.IDIOT syndrome symptoms include:

EMADS Symptoms:

- E: Spending too much time searching the internet for information.
- M: Mistrust of medical professionals whose advice could be personally obtained.
- A: A compulsive and unwanted quest for knowledge.
- D: Distress, including panic and worry, brought on by the search behaviour.
- S: Seeking confirmation from a trustworthy source or individual [6]

3.The Impact of IDIOT Syndrome on People's Health

3.1.Misinformation and incorrect diagnosis

Misdiagnosis and misinformation are two main ways that IDIOT syndrome compromises health. There is no shortage of contradicting advice and unreliable information on the internet. When people look for answers to their dental problems, they may end up taking dangerous or inaccurate advice, which makes their problems worse.

Unfounded Feeling of Safety

People who rely on information from the internet may feel insecure. In actuality, they can be ignoring a significant problem that needs medical attention, even though they think they have correctly diagnosed their ailment and are according to the recommended course of therapy.

3.2.DIF (DO IT YOURSELF) Dental Procedures:

When looking for dental treatments that they can do themselves, a lot of people search online. This can range from teeth-whitening kits to over-the-counter toothache treatments. Even though some of these techniques could offer momentary comfort or slight enhancements, they frequently miss the root causes of dental problems and occasionally end up doing more harm than good.

Believing Unconfirmed Sources

Not every piece of information on the internet is reliable. Using risky goods or methods can result from trusting unreliable sources. For example, employing abrasive materials to whiten teeth can cause enamel damage and sensitivity, which can result in long-term dental issues.

3.3.Fear of Dental Tools and Techniques

3.3.1.Anxiety and Aversion

A lot of people have dental anxiety, which can be made worse by unfavourable internet reviews and terrifying tales. This anxiety may cause people to put off important dental operations, which exacerbates oral health problems.

3.3.2.False Information

Myths about dental tools and procedures can be spread online, making them appear scarier than they actually are. For instance, some people may think that getting their teeth cleaned is uncomfortable and unneeded, which may discourage them from getting regular care.

3.3.3.Effects of Postponing Dental Care

Development of Dental Problems

Dental problems like cavities, gum disease, and infections can worsen if treatment is put off. A modest issue has the potential to worsen and necessitate more involved and costly medical care.

Enhanced Pain and Unease: Pain and discomfort can typically worsen if oral issues are ignored. Effect on General Health: If a minor cavity is neglected, it may develop into a painful abscess that calls for more invasive procedures like root canal therapy or extractions.

3.4.Systemic Health and Oral Health

General health and dental health are intimately related. Diabetes, lung infections, heart disease, and other systemic illnesses can all be exacerbated by poor oral hygiene and untreated dental problems. Oral bacteria have the ability to travel via the bloodstream and impact other bodily areas.[7]

3.5.Life Quality

Problems with oral health can have a big influence on life satisfaction. They may have an impact on speech, eating, and even self-worth. Dental problems that cause persistent pain and suffering can also cause stress and have an impact on mental health.

3.6.The Value of Consistent Dental Visits [8,9]

3.6.1.Early Identification and Avoidance

Frequent dental checkups make it possible to identify and prevent dental problems early on. Dentists can preserve oral health by detecting issues before they worsen and by offering expert cleanings.

3.6.2.Expert Counsel

Dentists are qualified to provide guidance based on each patient's needs. Based on a comprehensive examination and knowledge of the patient's medical history, they might suggest particular dental practices and products to assist maintain oral health.

3.6.3.Seeking Appropriate Advice

Expert Consultation

Seeking professional advice is essential when it comes to oral health. Dentists are qualified to effectively detect and treat dental conditions. They are able to offer individualized care that takes into account the patient's particular dental demands as well as general health.

3.6.4.Better Results

Digital imaging and computer-aided design and manufacture (CAD/CAM) are two examples of new technologies that have enhanced the precision of dental restorations and diagnosis accuracy. Better results and more resilient dental work are the result of these developments.

4.How should a dentist handle a case of IDIOT Syndrome: [5]

A proactive and instructional strategy is necessary to address IDIOT Syndrome in dentistry. Dentists can use a number of tactics to gain patients' trust and dispel any false information they may come across online:

4.1. Patient education: Dentists should explain diagnoses and treatment options in a way that is easy to comprehend. By providing an explanation for every treatment, patients are made less likely to trust false information they find online. During consultations, using models, movies, or visual aids can also assist patients better grasp their conditions.

4.2. Refer Patients to Reputable Sources: Dentists are able to point patients towards reliable sources of dental information, such as websites or other specialized dental journals, as well as national associations like the American Dental Association (ADA), Indian Dental Association (IDA), and British Dental Association (BDA), among others. This makes it possible to guarantee that patients looking for further information online are getting access to reliable, scientifically backed material.

4.3. Encourage Patients to express enquiries: Provide a secure environment for patients to express enquiries about what they've read online. Building trust and easing anxiety can be achieved by directly and sympathetically addressing their issues. Additionally, dentists should refrain from discounting patient reports too hastily since this could foster mistrust.

4.4. Online Presence: By providing accurate and beneficial dental information on websites, blogs, and social media, dentists can sustain a professional online presence. Dentists can assist patients in differentiating between fact and false information by establishing themselves as reliable sources of information.

4.5. Use of information-Based Practice: Dentists should make it clear that the solid scientific information they base their recommendations on is updated and reviewed on a regular basis. Providing patients with access to clinical guidelines or peer-reviewed studies can aid in the validation of expert advice.

These tactics support the significance of individualized care while lessening the impact of false information.

5. Will dentists be impacted by "IDIOT Syndrome" in the future? [7]

In the future, dentists and the dentistry profession are likely to be significantly impacted by IDIOT Syndrome (Internet-Derived Information Obstruction Treatment) in multiple ways.

5.1. Erosion of Trust in Expertise: Patients' confidence in expert dental advice may be undermined if they depend more and more on unreliable internet sources. Dentists may have more difficulty persuading patients that certain treatments are necessary, which could result in postponed care, worsened problems, and more involved operations down the road.

5.2. More stress for medical professionals: Patients may expect more help from medical professionals, which might cause more stress for medical professionals.

5.3. Extended Appointment Times: Dentists might have to spend more time dispelling myths and providing thorough explanations of procedures, which could make sessions go longer. This might have an impact on dental practices' productivity and lead to a decrease in the number of patients seen each day.

5.4. Increased Anxiety and Treatment Avoidance: Patients who are swayed by deceptive internet material may become more anxious about procedures like root canals or extractions, which may drive them to completely put off getting critical dental care. This may lead to an increase in serious oral health problems like infections or tooth loss.

5.5. Need for Digital Presence: Dentists will probably need to keep up a better online presence by disseminating reliable, factual content in order to counter misinformation. This change can necessitate investing more money, time, and energy into maintaining social media accounts, websites, and patient education materials.

5.6. Cyberchondria and Misinformation in Dentistry: Studies have revealed that patients commonly use the internet to research dental topics, which can cause anxiety to rise and result in improper treatment of dental disorders. Online misinformation can cause patients to make bad decisions, put off getting the care they need, and strain their relationship with their dentist. Some research is really pertinent here, such as that on cyberchondria, which is excessive health anxiety generated by internet knowledge. [10]

5.7. Patient Education and Confidence in Medical Services: Publications on patient education and the effect of false information on medical decision-making highlight the ways in which dentists and other healthcare providers can address these problems by improving patient education, fostering trust, and directing patients towards trustworthy information sources.

5.8. Healthcare Provider Reaction to Online Misinformation: There are resources available in the medical community that discuss the best ways for healthcare providers to combat misinformation. These tactics are applicable to the dental industry, where it is essential to have open lines of communication and educate patients using evidence-based practices.

Obviously, not all of the health and wellness-related content available online is accurate or false. The same holds true for data on any other internet-based subject. Fake health information is posted on some websites in an effort to increase traffic, sales, and ratings. These kinds of websites, which intimidate their viewers and build up the suspense, need to be watched. These websites ought to be disregarded. A number of reliable websites direct users to seek expert medical assistance while offering clear and accurate fundamental medical information. There are numerous instances where readers have changed their misinformed viewpoint on health issues as a result of reading such medical content online. This has made a significant difference in avoiding health issues. [11]

6. How to Prevent the IDIOT Syndrome:

The following are some tips for breaking the habit of constantly searching for symptoms online:

6.1. Speak with Medical Experts: To ensure that you receive proper diagnoses and treatments, always consult with licensed medical professionals. The internet should be used to supplement expert guidance rather than to replace it.

6.2. Make Use of Reputable Sources Continue using reliable websites.

6.3. Restrict Symptom Searches: Refrain from exhaustively looking for every symptom. Make a list of your worries instead and bring it up with the doctor when you visit for routine examinations.

6.4. Teach Carefully: Use the internet to learn about wellness and health in general but consult experts for assistance on specific medical conditions.

6.5. Be Wary of Anecdotal Evidence: Forums and first-person accounts can be deceptive. Recall that what works for one individual could not work for another, and that these sources frequently lack scientific backing.

Although the internet is a useful resource for finding health information, it's important to utilize it responsibly to prevent falling victim to IDIOT Syndrome. Relying too much on internet health information can lead to a number of possible problems, including incorrect diagnosis, elevated anxiety, and ineffective therapies. It is possible to successfully and safely navigate the digital health landscape by speaking with medical specialists and relying on reliable sources. Recall that the ideal approach to health is a well-rounded one that incorporates professional medical guidance with educated internet use. [5]

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